



State Senator

MARCH 9, 2006

**VALDE GARCIA**

*Serving the 22<sup>nd</sup> District*

*Shiawassee-Livingston-southern Ingham counties*

## **COFFEE BREAK NEWS**

### **Senate passes minimum wage increase**

The Michigan Senate unanimously passed legislation this week that would increase the state's minimum wage law from \$5.15 to \$6.95 per hour, starting October 1 of this year. The rate will continue to climb and reach \$7.40 per hour by July 2008. The Senate took action to pass legislation before it reached the ballot this fall. The ballot proposal would have been far more onerous for businesses already struggling to make ends meet. The ballot language would have tied the minimum wage increases to the Detroit inflation index, which means that small business in every region of the state would unfairly have their wages determined by what happens in Detroit.

The bill will now move to the state House of Representatives where Senator Garcia hopes for quick passage and a signature from the Governor soon thereafter.

### **Senator Garcia introduces legislation to temporarily adjust child support payments for deployed National Guard and reserve member**

National Guard and reserve members called to military duty could see a temporary modification in child-support payments with legislation introduced by Senator Garcia this week.

Senate Bill 1128 would qualify military deployment as a "change in circumstance" and allow a National Guard or reserve member to pay an adjusted amount in child-support payments if the military member experiences a decrease in compensation. At present, child-support payments may only be modified due to a "change in circumstance." At present military deployment does not qualify as a change in circumstance.

### **Sen. Garcia introduces legislation to increase penalties for right-of-way violators**

Motorists who do not abide by Michigan right-of-way laws could receive an increased punishment for their violations, according to legislation introduced this week by Senator Garcia.

Senate Bill 1126 would increase punishment to include a fine and license suspension to those who injure or kill others while violating right-of-way laws, in addition to any criminal charges and fines already in place.

In the past, when a motorist injured someone because of a right-of-way violation, there were no penalties to prohibit the driver from returning to the road. Due to the counterintuitive nature of the current law, this legislation would ensure the conviction would not be defeated by letting the violator keep their driving privileges. Under SB 1126, a minimum 30-day suspension will be imposed, with the possibility of fines.